



City Councilmember
Carl DeMaio

News Release

DeMaio Applauds Key Ruling on City Pension Benefits

Says Decision Validates His Push to Carefully Review Pension Reform Options

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CONTACT: Jennifer Jacobs, 619-236-6655

SAN DIEGO – San Diego City Councilmember Carl DeMaio today applauded another court victory in the city's efforts to seek legal remedies to its multi-billion dollar pension liability. In a decision handed down by Superior Court Judge Taylor, the City won a lawsuit against the police union contesting the validity of the Presidential Leave benefits granted to city union leaders.

The City prevailed in its argument that these particular pension benefits were illegally granted in that they were implemented in a manner that was not procedurally compliant with the City Charter. While narrowly focused on the Presidential Leave benefits, the ruling could have far-ranging implications on other pension benefits.

"Today's court victory is a significant development and provides city taxpayers with another avenue to tackle skyrocketing city pension costs," noted DeMaio. "This ruling also reinforces the need to explore all other legal options for reforming the city's pension system. City Attorney Jan Goldsmith and his team are to be commended for achieving another key win in their ongoing review of the city pension system."

DeMaio has been a vocal proponent of pension reform. In October, DeMaio joined with Councilmember Donna Frye in proposing a bipartisan pension reform framework that emphasized the need for a comprehensive legal review of reform options – and the commencement of negotiations with the city's labor unions.

DeMaio recently issued a memorandum to the City Attorney, Mayor and City Council where he laid out and requested legal analysis on a number of other possible pension reforms – including questions on whether some pension benefits have complied with certain Charter requirements. That memorandum can be accessed at www.sandiego.gov/cd5.

"Some have taken further pension reform off the table – claiming that no avenues exist to achieve additional cost savings in the pension system. This latest court ruling is yet another reason why a methodological, thoughtful, and strategic exploration to pension reform should be part of our approach to fixing the city's financial problems," concluded DeMaio.

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